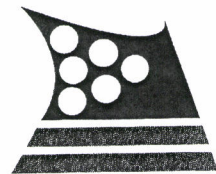


Blackfeet Community College

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Remember Our Past...Build Our Future

January 26, 2015

Dear Montana House Education Committee,

Tribal colleges are changing the face of education in Montana's tribal communities, and because of our proximity to neighboring communities we are serving significant numbers of non-beneficiary students in our higher education communities. Non-beneficiary funding has been in recent years characterized as a fund directed toward tribal colleges, when in fact, these dollars are provided so that tribal colleges can provide programs that support these students.

A legislative statutory change in non-beneficiary funding per student is needed to assist tribal colleges in planning for services. Currently, tribal colleges in Montana can only project spending based on our Bureau of Indian Education tribally controlled funding, this excludes funding for non-beneficiary students.

Tribal colleges offer a variety of programs in close proximity to rural communities that are attracting more non-beneficiary students. Overall the majority of degree-seeking tribal college students, will enter the Montana University System. Tribal college students are more likely to attain a bachelor's degree from a four-year institution if they started at a tribal college first and then transferred.

Montana's tribal college contribute greatly to the state-wide implementation of Indian Education for All (IEFA) with regards to higher education goals geared toward preparing students for working with and in diverse communities. Each tribal college has prioritized culture and language as corner-stones of their curriculum, institution, and workforce development goals.

Tribal colleges are good for Montana! On Behalf of Blackfeet Community College, we look forward to assisting in any way we can to inform the legislative process to best support our students in higher education!

Respectfully,

Dr. Billie Jo Kipp
Blackfeet Community College
President